

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Behind the Disguise In the Spy Trade

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Star Book Critic

ANATOMY OF SPYING. By Ronald Seth. (E. P. Dutton & Co.; \$5.95.)

There are many good spy stories in this excellent book written by a successful (i.e. live) British spy of the Second World War, but the main value of the book lies not so much in its narratives as in the explanation of the techniques and tricks of the trade of a profession that is in full swing in every civilized country in the world during war, cold war, or peace.

It is interesting to know, for example, that torture is not necessarily an instrument of sadism, but a recognized and accepted tool in an occupation which is governed by precedent if not by law. An inability to withstand prolonged torture is, in Mr. Seth's opinion, not a sign of lack of bravery. Some completely courageous men in spite of themselves crumple under prolonged pain, while others are able to fortify themselves with the knowledge that when pain saturates the entire body it is endurable because an increase would bring unconsciousness, a black-out that defeats the purpose of the torturers.

Francis Powers, the American U-2 pilot, was a spy who wins Mr. Seth's unstinted admiration. A spy's first duty is to get the desired information; his second is to come back alive. Powers, who at his trial had only one factor in his favor—the desire of Russia to make imperialist America the true culprit, not just a single aviator under orders—was extremely smart in his answers to the prosecutor's questions. A spy can always admit what he is certain that the enemy knows. Eisenhower

had himself said that Powers was a spy, but Powers firmly maintained that he was only pulling levers and pushing buttons the functions of which he did not know. The Russians led him to emphasize this point, drawing him carefully to their prime propaganda question: "Then, for all you knew, you might have been dropping an atomic bomb?" "No," said Powers, and the skill with which he handled his simple but difficult reply can easily be overlooked. "It wasn't the right kind of plane for an atomic bomb."

Like all spies, Powers carried with him the means of instantaneous suicide, but he was under no patriotic obligation, according to Mr. Seth, to use it. Certainly at the time it was less publicized, if mentioned at all, that he had a supply of Russian rubles to spend if forced down, superfluous to a spy morally bound to suicide. All in all, Powers can feel a certain pride that a colleague thinks him extraordinarily intelligent, capable and brave.

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